



In August I joined the Eastern Connecticut Workforce Investment Board’s Summer Youth Team at the Boland property in Willimantic where the Youth Team was helping to redevelop the site into a riverside park.

State Funding for the 29th District

This year I fought to bring more state money back to the towns of Brooklyn, Canterbury, Killingly, Mansfield, Putnam, Scotland, Thompson and Windham. The 2007-2009 biennial budget distributed additional aid to municipalities and made historic investments in education. We increased our share of state aid by over 7 percent. This new money can mean property tax relief for our communities and a better education for our kids.

	FY 06-07	FY 07-08	Increase from FY 07 to FY 08
Aid to Towns for Schools	\$72,057,865	\$77,746,492	\$5,688,627
Other Municipal Grants	\$16,771,120	\$17,939,567	\$1,168,447
Total	\$88,828,985	\$95,686,059	\$6,857,074

HELPFUL PHONE NUMBERS

HUSKY Health Insurance

The HUSKY Plan is a subsidized health insurance program to help Connecticut families obtain affordable coverage. To find out if you or your children qualify for HUSKY please call **1-877-CT-HUSKY (1-877-284-8759)**.

ConnPACE

Connecticut Pharmaceutical Assistance Contract to the Elderly and disabled is a state-funded program that helps seniors and disabled residents pay for certain prescription drugs. For more information call **1-800-423-5026**.

Consumer Protection

To find consumer information or to make a complaint call **860-713-6050**, or toll-free, **1-800-842-2649**.

Home Heating Assistance

Low-income individuals and families who are having trouble paying their heating bills may qualify for assistance. For more information call **1-800-842-1132**.

Long-Term Care Web Site

If you would like to receive information about services and programs for individuals 60 years old and over, call CHOICES at **1-800-994-9422**, or visit **www.ct.gov/longtermcare**.

Food Stamp Program

The Food Stamp Program helps people to buy nutritious food. In order to qualify for food stamps, you must be a resident of Connecticut whose income and assets are within set limits. For more information call **1-800-842-1508**.



Dear Neighbor,

This was both a challenging and exciting year at the State Capitol. As a state and as individuals, we face many new and difficult demands, all of which reinforced the need for the legislature to act boldly.

Accordingly, we made historic investments in our public schools, aid for higher education, health care and transportation. We also passed legislation to promote energy conservation, which will help to protect our environment and stabilize electric rates. These measures are all key components of building a healthier economy and encouraging job growth in Connecticut.

While our accomplishments were significant, we still have a lot of work to do. During the 2008 legislative session, I will continue to fight to make our children healthier, our neighborhoods safer and our state stronger.

As always, I welcome your ideas and look forward to hearing from you; please contact my office at 1-800-842-1420.

Sincerely,

Donald E. Williams, Jr.
Donald Williams
Senate President Pro Tempore

Stay Informed...

For the latest information on the issues affecting your district, please visit my Web site: **www.senatedems.ct.gov/Williams.html**



Senate President Pro Tempore
Donald E. Williams, Jr.

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Web www.senatedems.ct.gov/Williams.html

I’m proud
to represent the
29th state
Senate District
which includes
the communities
of Brooklyn,
Canterbury, Killingly,
Mansfield, Putnam,
Scotland, Thompson
and Windham

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MAKING OUR NEIGHBORHOODS SAFER

Parole and Sentencing Reform

The recent tragedy in Cheshire focused attention on the shortcomings of Connecticut’s parole system and the need for sentencing reform. A recent Quinnipiac University poll revealed that 60 percent of state residents have “less confidence” in the parole system since the Cheshire murders. Reforming this system will be among my highest priorities in the coming months. My colleagues and I will be looking at:

- ◆ the conditions under which parole may be granted;
- ◆ the qualifications of parole board members; and
- ◆ what information parole board members receive, when they receive it, and whether they use it in their decision-making process.

A Sentencing Reform Task Force was created in 2006 and charged with reviewing Connecticut’s sentencing laws to determine if penalties match crimes. This task force will issue its final report shortly, providing a solid base for sentencing reforms in the next legislative session beginning February 6, 2008.



Veterans’ Toll-Free Info Line

The legislature created a toll-free phone number that veterans can call for information. This toll-free line is now up and running, providing veterans with one place to call to receive information on benefits available to them. Call the Department of Veterans’ Affairs “Veterans’ Info Line” at 1-866-9CT-VETS (1-866-928-8387).

Disruption of a Funeral

The funeral of a loved one is a solemn time, yet some see funerals as an opportunity to promote a political or religious point of view. Most recently, a religious organization used military funerals as an opportunity to protest government policies. The legislature passed a law this year to make disruption of a funeral a Class A misdemeanor punishable by up to a year in jail or a \$2,000 fine.



Last January I unveiled my HealthFirst Connecticut proposal at Hartford Hospital with the support of many members of the medical profession. I presented my plan around the state—including stops at Day Kimball Hospital and Mansfield Town Hall—to solicit feedback from residents.

PUTTING A HEALTHY CONNECTICUT FIRST

Expanding Access to Health Care

We have a critical job to do in our state—establish access to quality, affordable health care for everyone. We made good progress toward this goal in 2007 by:

- ◆ raising the rates paid to doctors and dentists so they will accept more Medicaid and HUSKY patients;
- ◆ allowing children to be continued on their parents’ private health insurance until age 26;
- ◆ expanding eligibility for coverage by our HUSKY health insurance program; and
- ◆ establishing the HealthFirst Connecticut Authority to examine options for universal health care coverage and the Statewide Primary Care Access Authority to explore universal primary care.



To learn more, visit www.healthfirstct.org.

Taking on Cancer

Many of us know someone whose life has been touched by cancer. Recent reports show dramatic progress in beating this disease, but also reveal gaps—particularly for certain cancers that disproportionately affect women and minorities.

- ◆ For the past two years I have supported the efforts of the Connecticut Cancer Partnership to improve the quality of life for people in Connecticut living with this disease.
- ◆ The legislature included funding in the 2007-2009 biennial state budget for partnership programs to help people quit smoking and for free breast cancer screenings for eligible women.



President George H.W. Bush and First Lady Barbara Bush, co-chairs of the Washington D.C.-based cancer prevention group C-Change, presented me with the organization’s Exemplary Comprehensive Cancer Control Leadership Award in October.



I hosted a Southern New England Transportation Summit at the Capitol in April to bring together regional policy makers and experts.

INVESTING IN OUR TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Regional Rail Conference

In October, I participated in a regional conference on rail transportation hosted by the National Corridors Initiative.

- ◆ This conference was the third in a series—the first of which I hosted in Hartford last spring—to discuss what we can do to improve rail mobility throughout the Northeast.
- ◆ I have proposed a Northeast Rail Compact that would have all Northeastern states pool our resources to create a network of regional rail lines connecting with one another.
- ◆ The resulting system would link our cities—including New London, Providence, Worcester, Boston, New Haven and New York—to create bigger labor markets, reduce pollution, and improve our quality of life.

Fuel Cell Forum

Connecticut is an international leader in fuel cell technology; we are home to two of the biggest fuel cell manufacturers in the world.

- ◆ In 2006, we commissioned a study of how fuel cells could be used to power the Metro-North Railroad.
- ◆ Using fuel cells to generate rail power could reduce pollution, reduce the burden on our electrical system, and serve as a global showcase of Connecticut’s home-grown fuel cell technology.
- ◆ The General Assembly will consider legislation in 2008 to implement some of the study’s findings.

